



THE  
CARD-TABLE  
**CONNOISSEUR.**

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**CRITIC and CENSOR-GENERAL.**

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*Pares, et respondere parati.* **VIRG.**

**A**  
**DIALOGUE**  
**BETWEEN**

**A TEA-TABLE and a CARD-TABLE.**

**TEA-TABLE.**



O, Madam — these are fine hours, I must confess! It is now past four o'clock; and you and your companions have been making such a racket here, all sober people must cry out shame upon you. I wonder what pleasure it can be for fifty or an hundred persons to meet together and employ the whole night at Cribbage, Brag, and Whist. For my part, I am sure I had rather live in an

herb-cellar, and entertain washerwomen over their half-quarterns of bohea with a glass of gin between every cup, than lead such an irregular life as you do.

#### CARD-TABLE.

And I, Madam, had rather live in a filthy ale-house, and be poisoned with the greasy cards of porters and carmen, than lead such an insipid life as you do. You are, indeed, the delight of city-wives and maid servants: but I bless my stars, I am caressed by persons of the first rank and fashion, and am known to keep the best company.

#### TEA-TABLE.

Madam, if the truth was known, you have no reason to boast much of your company. Is it not notorious that you entertain the very worst of people? People that want common honesty, cheats of Quality, and Right Honourable sharpers. Who had you this night with you? — There was my Lord —, and Lady —, and Sir *John* —. These, indeed, are your persons of the first rank and fashion: but, to speak the truth, they are no better than pick-pockets.

#### CARD-TABLE.

I don't wonder you should grow so abusive, as your talent for scandal has always been remarkable. But pray, Madam, since you talk of company, what sort of people are your particular cronies? You are pleased to upbraid me with conniving at sharpers: and I am sure you associate with vile pimps and go-betweens. Who are they that usually compose your morning-levee? A milliner perhaps, or a mantua-maker, or a *French* hair-cutter: and these sort of gentry, you must own, are very commode in carrying on other business besides what they profess. Nay did not  
you

you admit Captain —— the other morning to a private tête à tête conversation with the lady of this house, and in her very bed-chamber?

## TEA-TABLE.

For that last visiter I must own myself obliged to you, Madam. The *Debt of Honour*, as you call it, in which you had involved her ladyship over night, they thought fit to cancel the next morning. And give me leave to tell you, Madam, that since the ladies have so much frequented your company, many of them have been first cheated of their money, and afterwards cajoled out of their virtue.

## CARD-TABLE.

This is always your way——your whole delight is in abusing other people, propagating malicious tales, and slandering reputations. But remember what the Poet says,

*Who steals my purse steals trash ——*

*But he who filches from me my good name, &c.*

The lines are very common, I need not repeat them to you,

## TEA-TABLE.

If they had not been very common, and taken out of a play besides, I should have wondered to hear you quote them. For who can be more illiterate than your friends and acquaintance? *Hoyle's Treatise on Whist* is almost the only book they have ever read: and as the mind of man, before it has received any ideas, has been compared to a white sheet of paper, we may say that a gamester's mind is a mere pack of cards, and has no impressions beyond the pips and the Four Honours.

## CARD-TABLE.

## CARD-TABLE.

To be sure, Madam, I must acknowledge your superior understanding; you have such prodigious opportunities of improving yourself! Can any thing, for instance, be so pleasant and instructive as your chit-chats and gossipings with the good city-wives over their *disturbed* tea and a huge plate of bread and butter!

## TEA-TABLE.

But can any thing be so insipid (to say no worse of it), as the polite jargon, which makes up the whole of your conversation over a pack of cards! In this, indeed, you put those of the highest rank and sense upon a level with the lowest and most ignorant of the vulgar; for gamesters have the same language whether in an alehouse or a drawing-room: and I would as soon listen to a set of draymen squabbling about their half-pence at All-Fours and One-and-Thirty, as to the club at *White's* wrangling for thousands. The talk of either party is altogether confined to their different games; and if the genteel gamester, upon every turn of the cards against him, damns himself with a good grace, the drayman bluntly pours out a volley of the same oaths. But I should not so much quarrel with you for having seduced the men, if you had not so strangely infatuated the ladies, who seem more particularly designed for my company. I am now looked upon as a mere incumbrance; and they think every moment that is lost upon me, very tedious, while it detains them from your refined pleasures. The women of this country used to be admired for their virtues as well as their beauty: but since you have engrossed so much of their time and thoughts, at the same time that you have spoiled their faces, you have corrupted their morals.

CARD-TABLE.

## CARD-TABLE.

Their morals, Madam!

## TEA-TABLE.

I know you make a jest of morality; and every other consideration gives way, when once the love of play is predominant. For example, — What an alteration have you made in the lady of this house? I used to see her every morning as blooming as a rose; nor had she any need of paint to repair the damages you have since done her, by keeping her up all night. At present I am seldom admitted to her before the afternoon; and till she has new dressed her face, she appears as haggard and as frightful as your *Queen of Clubs*. Before she fell into your company she had proper notions of virtue; but you soon reduced her to the necessity of parting with both her honour and honesty. In short, she now is — what I don't chuse to call her.

## CARD-TABLE.

Honour and honesty! ha, ha. — Upon my word, you are a strange old fashioned creature. I suppose, we shall have you talk of religion too.

## TEA-TABLE.

Why really, Madam, I must own that your acquaintance plainly enough manifest by their constant practice a thorough disregard to every thing sacred. They particularly take a pride in violating the Sabbath; and your company is the more acceptable among people of fashion upon that day, because you dare not then shew your face in any sober family.

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CARD-TABLE.



## CARD-TABLE.

Nay, now I have done with you, since you are such a low creature as to look upon Sunday as more holy than any other day. You are fit, indeed, to live in a fine lady's house, and to have any scruples of religion about you! But harkye,—We are to have a grand route here upon *Good-Friday*; and I would advise you to get down into the kitchen among the maids, where you may shew your regard to the day, by feasting them with Bohea of fix shillings a pound, and hot cross buns. And pray, Madam, let me hear no more of your religion.

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